

Blessing Our City

Imagine our city if Christians extended blessings & hospitality to everyone.

Welcoming New Imaginers

- **Imagine** is ...us imagining our future from this day on.
- We seek to imagine the future God is giving us.
- Folder & materials
- Be free and have fun
- **Take notes** of the ideas shared at your table.

Prayer

Lord, we pray your blessings on our gathering,
on our breaking bread together, and our conversations.
May you inspire our hearts and minds,
and may we imagine with you
the future you have in store for us.
In Christ's name and for his mission we pray. Amen.

Reviewing Our Mission as God's Mission

- We exist for God's mission in the world.
- We are *blessed to be a blessing* to all we encounter. (Gen 12)
- We are called to **host** others in love and care. (Gen 18)
- We are called to receive the blessings of guests. (Gen 18)
- We are called, equipped, and sent by Jesus to our people.

Immediate Action

- Imagine ways we will enlist greeters & hosts?
- Imagine ways we will form new groups?

We Exist for God's Mission

- Abraham & Sarah were called not for their own privilege but to serve God's mission.
- Our church exists not for itself - but to serve and advance God's mission.
- The church does not have a mission. Rather, the mission of God has a church.

Isaiah's Reminder

- Isaiah 49.6
"It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Judah and to restore the survivors of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations (ethnos), that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

Our Church Exists For ...

- Our church exists ...
as a network of Christians
that gathers at 314 Madison Street UMC
for worship, fellowship, spiritual nurture,
and to be equipped to advance God's mission.

Jeremiah's Mandate

- Jeremiah 29 (Prophet's letter to the Exiles in Babylon)
- "Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you ..." v.7
- "Pray to the Lord on its behalf." v.7
- "For in its welfare you will find your welfare." v.7

God's Mission Is *Here & Out There*

- God's mission through us ... starts with our call and our congregating, is strengthened by our love and care for one another, is inspired by God's Holy Spirit through us, **and happens where we live, work, and play.**

Imagine Joining God's Mission

- Imagine ways we can join God's mission, **out there**, where we live, work, and play.

Equipped for Every Good Work

2 Timothy 3.17

- Imagine ways we can **equip** one another to advance God's mission **out there**.

We Are Commissioned by Jesus

- Luke 10
- The Lord appointed 70 others and sent them on ahead of him to every town and place where he himself intended to go.
- Whatever house you enter, first say, "Peace to this house."
- Cure the sick, and say to them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you."

Called, Equipped, Sent

- Inspired by Jeremiah and Jesus ...
- We join God's mission where we live, work, and play.
- For in the welfare of others is our welfare. (Jeremiah 29)
- Jesus sends us to heal and to announce God's Way of Life (kingdom, reign) is already upon us. (Luke 10)

Harvest!

- The Promise of Jesus:
- "The harvest is bigger than you can imagine." (CEB)
- Jesus' missionaries returned joyously.
- Jesus overflowed with joy and gave thanks to God.

And Who Is Our Neighbor?

- Luke 10.25-37
- Who? The wounded man on the Jericho Road
- Who? The unlikely, untouchable Samaritan
- Who extends attentiveness, care, hospitality, healing
- Perhaps “our neighbor” is anyone who carries wounds.
- Perhaps “our neighbor” is the unlikely caregiver.

Speaking of Our Neighbors

- Imagine neighbors we want to discover and know more fully.
- Examples: downtown residents, downtown commerce & governance, APSU, Ft Campbell & military households, neighborhoods, schools, human need, arts & festivals, who’s moving to Clarksville and why?
- Imagine neighbors and institutions you want to add ...

Tying a Bow on It

- Christ’s hospitality is *here* and *out there*.
- Jesus goes with us to every place.
- We extend blessings, peace, healing, and good news.
- God does the rest in a harvest only God can imagine.

Next Week

- Defining our mission field
- Who lives, works, and plays in our mission field?
- Who are the partners in our mission field?
- How will we imagine blessing the ones of our mission field?

The Priestly Benediction

Numbers 6.24-26

- The Lord bless you and keep you.
- The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you.
- The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.
